

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANTANANARIVO 1592

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CARR (LAPPEMAN, EDMUND H.)
SUBJ: LAPPEMAN

REF: ANT 1572

1. SUMMARY: LAPPEMAN HAS TOLD CONSULAR OFFICER AND GOVERNMENT INTEROGATORS THAT HE HAD SLEPT THROUGH THE ESCAPE OF MARAIS AND WIGHT, POSSIBLY UNDER INFLUENCE OF DRUGS. THIS PLAUSIBLE STORY MAY AVOID HIS BEING ACCUSED OF COLLUSION IN THE ESCAPE. END SUMMARY.

2. LAPPEMAN TOLD ACTING CONSULAR OFFICER TODAY THAT HE HAD BEEN ASLEEP AT THE TIME MARAIS AND WIGHT ESCAPED. MARAIS HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN HIM TWO PILLS SAYING HE WAS TO TAKE THEM TO PROTECT HIMSELF FROM AN EPIDEMIC WHICH WAS GOING THROUGH THE PRISON. LAPPEMAN BELIEVES THEY WERE DRUGS AND THAT IS ONE REASON HE WAS NOT AWAKENED WHEN MARAIS AND WIGHT ESCAPED THROUGH A HOLE IN THE FLOOR OF THE CELL.

3. LAPPEMAN SAID THAT IT WAS HE WHO REPORTED THE ABSENCE OF THE TWO MEN FROM HIS CELL WHEN HE DISCOVERED IT THE NEXT MORNING. HE WAS QUESTIONED BRIEFLY SUNDAY AND TOLD THE INTEROGATORS EXACTLY WHAT HE TOLD CONSULAR
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OFFICER. HE HAS NOT BEEN BOTHERED SINCE. HE AND THE INTEROGATORS BOTH NOTED THAT THE HOLE IN THE BOTTOM OF THE CELL HAD APPARENTLY BEEN PIERCED FROM UNDERNEATH. ACCORDING TO LAPPEMAN, THERE WAS NO DEBRIS IN THE CELL OR EVIDENCE THAT ANY WORK HAD BEEN DONE FROM INSIDE. MARAIS AND WIGHT HAD NOT HAD ANY TOOLS TO DO SUCH A JOB. DIGGING OF ESCAPE HOLE FROM OUTSIDE SQUARES

WITH GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE ABOUT ESCAPE WHICH SAID TWO SOUTH AFRICANS HAD HELP OF GREEDY AND REACTIONARY MALAGASY ACCOMPLICES.

4. LAPPEMAN ALSO REPORTED THAT TEN DAYS AGO HE HAD BEEN ASKED BY MARAIS TO SIGN A LETTER IN DUPLICATE SAYING THAT, IF AN OPPORTUNITY TO ESCAPE PRESENTED ITSELF TO THE TWO SOUTH AFRICANS, HE, LAPPEMAN, DID NOT INTEND TO JOIN THEM. THE LETTER WAS APPARENTLY INTENDED FOR LAPPEMAN'S FAMILY OR OTHER PERSONS WHO MIGHT QUESTION THE TWO SOUTH AFRICANS AFTER THEIR ESCAPE ABOUT WHY THEY HAD LEFT LAPPEMAN BEHIND. LAPPEMAN HAS NOT REPORTED THIS ITEM TO THE INTERROGATORS.

5. THE ESCAPE OF THE SOUTH AFRICANS AND THE APPEAL BY MINISTRY OF INTERIOR TO THE POPULACE TO APPREHEND THE TWO MEN IF FOUND HAVE BEEN SUBJECT OF A GOOD DEAL OF CRITICISM IN ANTANANARIVO. SOME PERSONS CONTEND THAT IT IS REDICULOUS FOR GOVERNMENT, AFTER HAVING PERMITTED THIS ESCAPE, TO THINK THAT THE TWO MEN ARE STILL IN THE COUNTRY. FURTHER, THEY THINK IT IS ABSURD FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO ESPECT THAT THE UNARMED POPULACE SHOULD APPREHEND TWO DANGEROUS MEN WHO MAY BE ARMED. THERE IS ALSO A RUMOR CIRCULATING THAT THE ESCAPE WAS DELIBERATELY ARRANGED BY THE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE A SHIP BELONGING TO PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA'S BROTHER HAS BEEN SEIZED IN SOUTH CONFIDENTIAL

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AFRICA AND THIS RELEASE OF THE TWO PRISONERS IS PAYMENT FOR THE RELEASE OF THE SHIP.

6. COMMENT: LAPPEMAN'S STORY SOUNDS PLAUSIBLE TO US AND MAY AVOID HIS BEING TRIED FOR COLLUSION IN THIS ESCAPE. TODAY'S FRENCH LANGUAGE DAILY MADAGASCAR MATIN HAS A LONG SPECULATIVE ARTICLE ASKING HOW HE COULD HAVE BEEN UNAWARE OF THE INTENT OF THE MEN TO ESCAPE AND WHY HE DID NOT REPORT IT.

7. ON ANOTHER ASPECT OF THIS CASE, I FOUND MYSELF ON AUGUST 19 AT A LUNCHEON WITH PROCUREUR GENERAL ANDRIAMISEZA I ASKED HIM IF IN HIS PERSONAL OPINION THERE WAS ANY DANGER THAT LAPPEMAN WOULD GET A HARSHER SENTENCE IF A NEW TRIAL WERE HELD. CHOOSING HIS WORDS CAREFULLY, ANDRIAMISEZA REPLIED THAT HE COULD NOT GIVE ME A DEFINITE ANSWER SINCE THE MATTER WOULD BE DECIDED BY JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES. "REGARDLESS OF WHAT GOVERNMENT IS IN POWER" BUT, HE SAID, HE COULD TELL ME IN ALL CONFIDENCE THAT "YOU WERE NOT WRONG TO HAVE APPEALED THE CASE." I SPOKE TO HIM ABOUT THE VARIOUS AND SOMETIMES CONFLICTING OPINIONS I HAD RECEIVED ON THIS SUBJECT AND HE ENDED THE CONVERSATION BY SAYING " I DON'T THINK LAPPEMAN WILL GET A HARSHER SENTENCE. YOU ARE DOING

RIGHT BY APPEALING THE CASE." THESE REMAKKS OF ANDRIAMISEZA
AND HIS RECENT ENCOUNTER WITH ANDRIAMADISON, FOLLOWING
RECEIPT OF MCNAMARA'S LETTER OF JULY 7, CONFIRMED
ME IN MY BELIEF THAT ANDRIAMISEZA OFFERED NO DEAL
TO MCNAMARA WHILE HE WAS IN NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON, D.C.,
LAST JUNE.

8. SICARD RETURNED FROM FRANCE TODAY AND I WILL BE SEEING
HIM LATER.

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